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# United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON  
HOMELAND SECURITY AND GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS  
WASHINGTON, DC 20510-6250

January 25, 2007

Mr. Paul Wolfowitz  
President  
The World Bank  
1818 H Street, NW  
Washington, D.C. 20433

Dear Mr. Wolfowitz,

I write to recall an agreement we made at our meeting at the World Bank four months ago on October 4, 2006.

At that meeting – necessitated by seven unfruitful months of negotiation with World Bank staff – we sat down to discuss World Bank activities on malaria and the concern that the Bank, by its actions, was demonstrating a seeming lack of transparency through an unwillingness to answer Congressional inquiries about allegations of mismanagement and non-delivery of promised funds in past malaria programs. We agreed that open and transparent briefings would be the next step to thoroughly vet these issues. It was my understanding that these briefings would take place in short order, and you suggested that our staff meet to make the arrangements.

On December 4, 2006, my staff were finally able to achieve a high-level meeting your staff. At that meeting, the staff agreed to touch base in January and schedule an open dialogue on the Hill for interested staffers. I regret to say that a concrete date for the World Bank to visit the Hill has not yet been confirmed, even for the month of February 2007. It seems that a series of redundant questions (i.e. repeated questions about subject matter, participation, requests for secrecy of the proceedings), bureaucratic obstacles (i.e. is the Bank accountable to its largest donor in this way) and spurious concerns (such as whether or not Appropriators will “approve”) are precluding a date from being set. It has now been over nine months since I first requested this Congressional briefing, and ten months since the *Lancet* article was published. I or my staff have made repeated and polite inquiries throughout that time. The only conclusion I can draw is that these so-called questions and concerns are masking an unwillingness to be transparent and accountable for Bank programs when they are publicly criticized in peer-reviewed scientific journals.

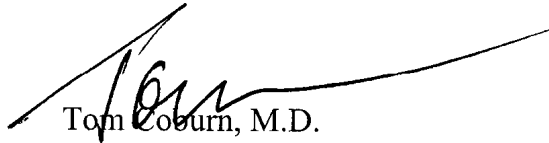
As I have said before, I am eager to hear and to widely disseminate any legitimate and responsible rebuttal the Bank has to criticisms raised in the scientific literature, and I continue to hope to work with you towards the goal of achieving greater transparency – and it is on that note that I would certainly hope there is no existing rule or regulation that would prevent Bank staff from briefing appropriate bicameral, bipartisan Congressional staff on these issues. In addition, I think it is reasonable, considering a portion of this briefing will be spent addressing the allegations first brought to light in the *Lancet* article of last April, to invite experts to address and answer questions on allegations brought in that article, including one or more of its authors, if the need should arise for clarifications during the proposed briefing.

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As you know, the U.S. Senate is currently beginning a legislative cycle during which it is quite possible that issues such as these may arise in the context of the next U.S. contribution to the IDA-14 replenishment. It is my hope that we can achieve open and informative dialogue with the World Bank before that time.

Thank you again for your commitment to conquering the ravages of this killer disease, and for your leadership and commitment to achieve transparency in World Bank programs. I look forward to cooperating with you to achieve these laudable goals.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Tom', with a long, sweeping horizontal line extending to the right.

Tom Coburn, M.D.  
Ranking Member,  
Subcommittee on Federal Financial Management,  
Government Information, Federal Services, and  
International Security